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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 TAIPEI 001867

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H PLEASE PASS TO CONGRESSMAN FALEOMAVAEGA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/15/2017

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [TW](#)

SUBJECT: CONGRESSMAN FALEOMAVAEGA'S MEETINGS WITH TAIWAN  
LEADERS

Classified By: AIT Director Stephen M. Young, Reason 1.4 (b/d)

¶1. (C) Summary: In meetings with Taiwan leaders during his August 11-14 visit, Congressman Eni Faleomavaega voiced strong U.S. support for Taiwan's democracy, but also expressed U.S. concerns about maintaining stability in the region. The Congressman encouraged President Chen to improve relations with China in order to preserve peace across the Strait and minimize the potential for a military confrontation between Beijing and Washington over Taiwan. President Chen underscored his continued support for the UN Referendum, arguing that it reflects the "voice of the Taiwan people." Pursuing a referendum is a democratic way to resist incessant PRC pressure on Taiwan, Chen argued, and the referendum falls short of crossing a "red line" on independence, which he claimed the U.S. has shifted over time. The Congressman informed President Chen that he plans to call for a HFAC subcommittee hearing to review the Taiwan Relations Act and other Taiwan-related issues sometime in September or October. The Congressman conveyed similar points in his meetings with Vice President Lu, Premier Chang, Foreign Minister Huang, and KMT presidential candidate Ma Ying-jeou. End Summary.

President Chen on the UN Referendum and US "Red Lines"

¶2. (C) Congressman Eni Faleomavaega (D-American Samoa) voiced strong U.S. support for Taiwan's democracy during meetings with Taiwan leaders August 11-14, but also expressed U.S. concerns about maintaining stability in the region. In a meeting with President Chen Shui-bian on August 13, the Congressman encouraged Taiwan to develop better relations with China in order to preserve peace across the Strait and minimize the potential for a military confrontation between Beijing and Washington over Taiwan. The Congressman informed President Chen that he plans to call for an HFAC subcommittee hearing to review the Taiwan Relations Act and other Taiwan-related issues sometime in September or October.

¶3. (C) President Chen thanked the Congressman and the U.S. Congress for their long-term support for Taiwan and its democratization, but argued that the democracy now enjoyed by

the 23 million people of Taiwan should not be "limited or restricted." President Chen stressed his continued support for the UN Referendum, arguing that it reflects the "voice of the Taiwan people" and not merely his personal will. Chen said the pursuit of a referendum is a democratic way to resist incessant PRC pressure on Taiwan and falls short of crossing a "red line" on independence, which he claimed the U.S. has shifted over time. The UN Referendum is Taiwan's way to "say no" to Beijing's assertion that the PRC represents Taiwan and has sovereignty over the island. Chen emphasized that Taiwan is not seeking to change the status quo or the nation's title, pointing out that even the U.S. calls Taiwan "Taiwan" and not the "Republic of China" as evidenced by the "Taiwan Relations Act." In any case, the PRC is opposed to both names. Noting that he will be traveling to the Marshall Islands to attend the Second Annual Taiwan-Pacific Allies Summit from October 12-14, President Chen invited the Congressman to attend the proceedings.

#### Foreign Minister Huang on Cross-Strait Tensions

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¶4. (C) Meeting with Foreign Minister James Huang (Chih-fang) on August 13, Congressman Faleomavaega underscored the strong Congressional support for Taiwan, citing the recent passage of Resolution 136 that calls for lifting U.S. travel bans imposed on Taiwan's elected leaders as an example. The Congressman noted that in earlier meetings with Chinese officials he had cautioned them not to "overreact" to political developments on Taiwan and had urged them to actively engage Taipei to seek a suitable role for Taiwan in the international community. The Congressman urged Taiwan to work with its diplomatic partners in the South Pacific to coordinate efforts to establish a regional

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fisheries program, noting that Taiwan's edge in fishing technology could help boost the island nations' economies and expand trade with American Samoa.

¶5. (C) Foreign Minister Huang thanked the Congressman for supporting Resolution 136, emphasizing that it is a welcome sign to Taiwan as it faces an "uphill battle" against a China that is making every effort to isolate Taiwan internationally. Huang said that Taiwan risks "disappearing" if it follows the rules set by Beijing. President Chen's recent moves on the UN issue are a response to the "will of the people" and are not intended to provoke China, "make any trouble," or raise tensions across the Taiwan Strait. Taiwan is willing to engage Beijing in political discussions without any preconditions, but Huang asserted that Beijing's insistence on acceptance of the one-China principle has dimmed prospects for substantive talks. Huang maintained that cross-Strait tensions are still far from a point where the use of force could be considered by either side. According to Huang, President Chen is a "sensible" politician and a "simple man" who knows what is good for the country yet understands the "external constraints" imposed upon him.

#### Premier Chang On Cross-Strait Relations

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¶6. (C) In a meeting with Premier Chang Chun-hsiung on August 13, Congressman Faleomavaega said that, despite Beijing's urging him not to participate in the Democratic Pacific Union's Second Annual Session, he had come to Taiwan in hopes of building bridges between the U.S. and Pacific countries. Premier Chang thanked the Congressman for his visit, noting that Congress has historically staunchly supported Taiwan and its democratic development. Chang expressed his wish to see continued peace in East Asia, but said that Beijing maintains an aggressive attitude toward Taiwan, building up missile forces and stepping up efforts to undermine Taiwan internationally. Chang said he hoped the two sides could engage in a constructive dialogue on an equal footing to reduce tensions and misunderstandings. He also

said that Taiwan needs to keep communications open to the U.S., especially during an election year, in order to avoid unnecessary misunderstandings and suggested establishing a mechanism to hold direct high-level talks.

Vice President Lu Dinner  
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17. (C) Vice President Annette Lu (Hsiu-lien) told Congressman Faleomavaega during a dinner on August 12 that the people of Taiwan are frustrated by their lack of a voice in the international community, which has excluded them from international organizations such as the UN. Although the tactics employed by President Chen to push Taiwan's entry into the UN may be controversial and not well thought out, Lu pointed out that the goal of UN representation nevertheless reflects the will of Taiwan's 23 million people. She thanked Congress for its past support of Taiwan's democratization and asked that it lend equal support to Taiwan's UN entry. Lu repeatedly raised the issue of China's response to the UN proposal, arguing that Beijing would not be willing to use force over the issue and is not prepared to attack Taiwan.

COA Meeting on Fisheries Issues  
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18. (C) In a meeting with the Deputy Minister of the Council of Agriculture (COA) Lee Jen-chyuan, Congressman Faleomavaega emphasized the importance of tuna fishing for the economy of South Pacific islands and urged COA to support a joint venture between FCF Fishing Co., one of the world's largest commercial fishing companies based in Kaohsiung, and a US consortium. The venture would be of mutual benefit to the fishing industries of both Taiwan and islands in the region. The Congressman noted that five months ago in Washington he hosted the heads of state of the six South Pacific island nations that recognize Taiwan and that he has urged Taiwan to

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take the lead in coordinating international recognition of exclusive fishing rights for these six nations within their respective exclusive economic zones.

19. (C) Deputy Minister Lee praised the close bilateral cooperation on fishing issues, and expressed appreciation for U.S. assistance in restoring Taiwan's full 14,900 ton quota under the International Commission for Conservation of Atlantic Tuna. Lee said that Taiwan values its ties with the six Pacific Island nations and is implementing a series of seminars and workshops to help them further develop their agriculture and fishing industries. Lee requested U.S. assistance in ensuring Taiwan receives "equal treatment" in international fisheries organizations, such as ICCAT, of which Taiwan is a cooperating non-member. Fisheries Agency Deputy Director James Sha (Chung-yi) told the Congressman that with the expiration on July 31 of the MOU between AIT and TECRO on fisheries cooperation Taiwan has submitted its comments on the Joint Work Plan, but has not received a reply from the U.S. The Congressman told Sha he would look into the matter upon his return to Washington.

Ma Ying-jeou Offers Presidential Tour d'Horizon  
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110. (C) Over a working breakfast on August 14, KMT presidential candidate Ma Ying-jeou told Congressman Faleomavaega that he wants to establish a "modus vivendi" for negotiating with Beijing. This would require acknowledging there is only one China, he said, though he explained that he "will define one China differently than Beijing" and stressed that he does not support unification in the foreseeable future. On that basis, Ma said, he would move quickly to implement the "three links" by pushing for early negotiations on both cross-strait charter flights and PRC tourists visiting Taiwan. A major goal of his negotiating with the PRC, he explained, would be to increase Taiwan's

international space, noting Taiwan would also need U.S. help in this effort. Ma told the Congressman that a KMT government under his leadership would emphasize stability and good relations with the U.S., the PRC, as well as Japan. His approach would be non-confrontational in place of President Chen's combativeness and surprises. (Comment: Congressman Faleomavaega's meeting with Ma Ying-jeou was noteworthy because the Taipei District Court was scheduled to announce its decision on Ma's corruption trial just two hours later. Despite the intense pressure on Ma, he appeared relaxed and wholly focused on the meeting with the Congressman. End Comment.)

¶11. (C) Congressman Faleomavaega stressed to Ma that the U.S. does not want to see an increase in cross-Strait tensions or a repeat of the confrontation that occurred in 1995-96. The U.S., he emphasized, does not want to send troops into the Taiwan Strait area. Noting Taiwan's prominence in the international fisheries industry and his own visit to Kaohsiung's FCF Fishery, which has one of the largest tuna fleets in the world, the Congressman urged greater U.S.-Taiwan cooperation on tuna fishing and his hope that the Taiwan fishery and American Samoa canning industries would increase their commercial ties.

¶12. (U) Congressman Faleomavaega did not have the opportunity to clear this cable before his departure from Taipei.  
YOUNG